162, 166, 101, 619, 643, 622, 361, 438

/For information on the settled tribes of the Aden Protectorate and the Hadhramaut in 1920, the territory occupied, the paramount rulers and tribal chiefs, brief history, their settlements, means of livelihood, etc., see 30: Great Britain, MJ1 Saudi Arabia, category 116, pp. 509-546./

5; Harrison D-4 (1912-1924) 1924 M1 Middle East
Bedouin MJ4

361

© Underwood & Underwood

BEDOUINS IN THE DESERT

[facing page 20]

5: Harrison D-4 (1912-1924) 1924 M1 Middle East
Saudi Arabia MJ1
Bedouin MJ4

SA 136 to be seen all along the way. One large variety is about a foot and a half long, and its meat is esteemed a great delicacy by the Bedouins, who call it "the fish of the desert." Many smaller lizards are found, and a few birds. There are also tracks of a wolf to be made out occasionally, but that is a rare occurrence, as is also the sign of a fox. The lizards may be able to dig down far enough in their holes to reach damp soil, but certainly the gazelles must get their necessary water from the few plants that remain succulent and fresh in the summer months.

B 162 312 233 361 And there are people who live in that desert, not travelers only, but permanent residents. They live there not merely during the spring when there is a little rain, but the year around. How can men live in a country like that? The well is the answer. The little green vegetation to be seen in the spring when the meager rains come soon dries down, and the inexperienced eye of the stranger would scarcely find it. Nevertheless, it is sufficient for goats and camels and perhaps sheep to graze upon if wells can be found in addition where they can be watered every evening. So it happens that the most precious things in Arabia are the wells. Caravan routes may be crooked, but the reason is never far to seek. For three or four days camels can travel without a drop of water, but eventually they must drink like all the other animals in the world. Some parts of the desert which are richest in vegetation are quite deserted as far as human beings are concerned, and the reason is the same. In the summer when the thermometer may occasionally reach 135° at noon, it is no use to discover an area covered with abundant dry fodder. It is the well that is the essential thing. Wherever water can be secured, there men can live. It is not such a life as would be popular in

SA [132] 000

5: Harrison D-4 (1912-1924) 1924 M1 Middle East
Bedouin M54

spacious chafes his spirit and he looks with contempt and pity on the poor creatures that are willing to spend their days in the narrow confines of a town. This pity is for the cultivator and equally for the land-owner and the merchant, who so far worship their bodies that they will swathe them in silk and deck them with gold, a thing permissible for women, but contemptible for a man. The hardest work of the desert Arab is concerned with leading his flocks and with breaking up and repitching camp. As a result, he develops a great distaste for manual labor. He regards it as degrading, and no small amount of his dislike for life in a town rests on that fact. Digging up the ground, patiently caring for plants and crops, and all the work of the agriculturist he looks on as beneath him. Free men were created for something better than that.

It is the impression of a stranger to the country that not a blade of grass or a single date palm could be raised in all Arabia except in the oases where the gardeners work. The Arabs tell us that this is far from the truth. There are many places where water can be found close to the surface and where gardening could be carried on profitably. In connection with the *Akhwan* movement of puritan Wahabi Mohammedanism that has swept over all inland Arabia in the last few years, one of the efforts of the leaders has been to settle a certain number of the new converts in towns and villages. Altogether some sixty-five new settlements have been started since the inception of the movement. Doubtless most of these are very small, but there are a few of considerable size, and two or three are small cities of perhaps five thousand inhabitants. The Arabs insist that there are many other such places, where communities might spring up

5: Harrison D-4 (1912-1924) 1924 M1 Middle East
Bedouin M54

168 if the Bedouins were willing to settle down to that sort
361 of existence.

461 But the Bedouin, even though he knows of these places, does not care to give up his free desert life for the hard
463 and disagreeable labor of the towns. He is faithful to
552 his camels, and to his goats and sheep if he is fortunate
231 enough to have them. He loves these animals and not one of them lacks a personal name. The little lambs and kids will be carried in his arms when the road is rocky
461 or steep. The work of a cultivator, however, he hates,
565 and he will nearly starve before descending to such a level
186 as to engage in it. He looks down upon the townsmen with a lofty scorn and thinks of their hard labor as unworthy of men, fit rather for animals. This remarkable man regards himself as heaven's favorite, and he exhibits a contempt for the rest of the world and a satisfaction with himself and his life that would be sublime if they were not terribly pathetic.

181 Yet far from being ridiculous this Bedouin of the des-
611 ert is one of the most splendid figures of our time. Out
735 of that fearful poverty which amounts to constant semi-starvation, out of a lack of cleanliness that is continual degradation of the spirit, out of an isolation and an ignorance that make him a provincial in spite of himself, he stands as the world's supreme example of that Liberty, Equality and Fraternity that have been the dream of the ages. Tied down and limited by the lack of all material things, his spirit looks on them with indifference and cheerful contempt and pines away only when immersed in the obese and self-satisfied materialism of the town. He rises triumphant over his environment by the sheer strength of his spirit. Ignorant of all the wis-

BEDOUINS MJ4

a chronological sequence in this division as the simpler economic 000
activities of food-gathering and hunting invariably precede the more advanced pursuits of tillage and animal husbandry.

While for a long time the theory was upheld,[1] that human civilization developed in three stages; hunting, breeding and farming,[2] a number of students of human culture have pointed out that stock-breeding does not necessarily precede agriculture, as there have been primitive peoples who began cultivation without ever passing through the pastoral stage. A more suitable gradation of human society was introduced by its dichotomy according to the economic activities of food-gathering and food-producing. This classification distinguishes the parasitic existence of the collectors from the productive life of the breeders and farmers. The pastoral nomad shares with the primitive food-gatherer the constant need for wandering, while as breeder of animals his economy is productive.

Nomadism cannot be regarded as a primitive stage of human civilization, but must be viewed as a mode of life which developed in response to certain geographical conditions. In the final analysis it is not the people, but the natural conditions of soil, climate and water which will determine the forms of existence, pastoral or settled agrarian.

Pastoralism in the Middle East has been regarded[3] as an unsatisfactory alternative to agriculture. Considering the 361 311

---

1. Boas, 1938, p. 283
2. Eduard Hahn, Alexander von Humboldt and others
3. Fisher, 1950, p. 119

361 desert with its limited opportunities for finding means of
311 sustenance has been held the only possible answer to the rigors of the geographical environment.

This view, however, can be challenged. In the Arabian peninsula nomadism may be inevitable, but with regards to the potentially cultivable areas of Iraq, Syria, Palestine and Transjordan, for centuries used by the tribes as grazing grounds for their flocks, the situation is different. The land was not always barren, vast stretches of fertile soil turned into desert because of the nomads whose destructive way of living was victorious, where settled society was not powerful enough to check Bedouin incursions.

361 While the nomads contribute their share to the general
433 economy, it cannot be maintained that the roving existence is a geographical necessity. The nomad in general responds and adapts himself to the desert, but sometimes he actually creates it. Only on a higher level of civilization is the attempt made by people to liberate themselves from the limitations of the environment. In the past and at present settlers have often displayed the tendency to condition the land to suit them. The relationship of man towards the land and the amount of care he gives the soil that sustains him can serve as a measuring rod for the standards of his civilization.

361 Prosperity in the Middle East of antiquity was the result
311 of intelligent utilization of land and water resources. Present day devastation is to a great extent the outcome of Bedouin economy and neglect.

The Bedouin Problem

The Bedouin cannot live in the desert without maintaining regular contact with the domain of settled society where he trades the surplus products of his economy for essential provisions. 361 609 621

In the past, the Bedouin have entered the cultivated zone either as conquerors, reducing the peasants to a state of semi-slavery and transforming fertile land into pastures for their herds, or as peaceful guests.[1]

The conduct of the Bedouin on the outskirts of the settled region is determined by the ability of the government to defend the country and impose restrictive measures on the nomads. Once they accept the idea of compliance with certain conditions, they will soon become semi-nomadic and evolve towards sedentarization.

The substance of Bedouin policy in all the countries of the Middle East is the attempt by the political authorities to subject the nomads to a restrictive code of behavior calculated to protect the settled population, and to organize, facilitate, direct and accelerate their sedentarization. 361 166x

The Crisis in the Bedouin World

In modern times the settlement of the nomads has been regarded as one of the outstanding domestic problems in Arabia and the countries of the Fertile Crescent. The issue has been forced to a head by the crisis which the Bedouin world is under- 361 166x 178

---

1. Muller, 1931, pp 18-19

361 going in the wake of profound political, economic and social
X166 changes:
178 a. political

The national governments of the Bedouin-inhabited countries, unwilling to have the tribes under their territorial jurisdiction remain as a separate social unit outside the national community, consider their permanent settlement on land absolutely essential to insure stability and progress. They are sure that, once the nomads become tied to the soil, the tribal system will begin to disintegrate and cease being a "state within a state." By controlling the Bedouin and encouraging their settlement, the administrations are putting an end to the special political status which the tribes enjoyed on the borders of the desert.

b. economic

341 With the conquest of the desert by modern means of trans-
X166 portation the camel-breeding industry of the true Bedouin has
178 been severely hit. Enforcement of public security destroyed
433 additional sources of livelihood, such as the plunder of caravans, inter-tribal raiding and the extortion of khuwa[1] from village communities and weaker semi-nomadic tribes. Extension of cultivation in the area is rapidly limiting the wandering territory of the tribes and thus adversely affecting their traditional pastoral economy.

---

721 1. Bedouin raids are usually directed against other tribes or
728 caravans which are attacked and plundered. The toll which is frequently levied on the agricultural settlements on the fringe of the desert is called by the name khuwa, protection money.

68: Neubart S-4 (no date) 1952 M1 Middle East
BEDOUINS MJ4

With the improvements of communication and construction of pipe- 369 178
lines there has been an ever-increasing mutual contact between the nomads and the settled people of village and town. While tribal sheikhs are the first to come under the influence of modernization, the tribesmen are also gradually adopting the mode of existence of settled society.

CHAPTER 1

Definition of the Area under Consideration

361 121

This paper will limit itself primarily to the problem of sedentarization of the nomadic populations in the countries of the Fertile Crescent, that is: Iraq, Syria, Jordan (Transjordan) and Israel (Palestine), an area which distinguishes itself by its Moslem Arab majority,[1] its striking similarities of natural environment and social organization. Saudi Arabia was included in this study because of the inter-relations which exist between the Bedouin of the Arabian and Syrian deserts. Tribes of the Anezeh Confederation wander from Saudi Arabia through Jordan into Syria and back and sections of the Shammar migrate back and forth between Arabia and Iraq.

Desert and Soil

132 133

The chief common natural feature of the area is of a ge-

---

1. With the exception of the Kurdish language used by the Kurds in Syria and Iraq, Aramaic spoken by the Nestorian Christians in Kurdistan and in a few villages in Syria, and Hebrew spoken by the Jewish community of Israel, the area is Arabic in character.

132 graphic-climatic characters[1] Regions with hot, rainless summers
133 and cool, wet winters where cultivation is possible and enormous expanses of desert with extremes of high temperatures and almost complete dryness where nothing but rough grasses, hardier shrubs can grow. The amount of annual precipitation will make the difference between the desert and soum, it is ultimately the climatic conditions which will determine where and when cultivation is possible and what types of crops may be selected. The dividing line between the arid desert and the cultivated land is not a rigidly defined boundary. Generally there is a gradual transition from the soum to the barren desert, steppe land[2] as a rule constituting the intervening belt. The width of the semi-desert or steppe land is not identical in all the regions, and it is not static. Throughout the ages it has varied in response to human factors.[3]

133 The steppe is the permanent domain of the nomads who breed
361 sheep and goats, and the camping area of the camel Bedouin during the hot summer months when life in the desert is intolerable.

---

1. For a more detailed description of the common geographic characteristics of the Middle East see: Patai, 1952. As the author deals with the entire area of the Middle East: North Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, the Iranian Plateau and Asia Minor, his numerical percentages of desert and soum as well as settled and nomadic people are not necessarily applicable to the more limited region which is considered in this paper.
2. Districts receiving 200 - 300 mm of rain have steppe character, while tracts whose annual precipitation remains below this figure may be regarded as desert. Cf. Bonne, 1948, p. 149.
3. The shifting boundary line between desert and soum is not the result of changing natural conditions like climatic changes as it has been variously suggested.

M1 Middle East
BEDOUINS MJ4
166X

already settled, have resumed their nomadic mode of existence when political conditions permitted it.[1] M. F. Jamali mentions a number of instances where fully settled tribes of Iraq turned semi-nomadic. Joseph Baraslavsky concludes[2] that certain families of the Tayaha tribe in the Negev seem to have descended from the settled population of Zoar. A. Konikoff states[3] that economic reasons forced settled families of southern Transjordan to form themselves into tribes and adopt the way of life best suited to desert conditions. Max Oppenheim mentions[4] that the powerful Howeitat tribe of Transjordan descended from merchants and peasants.

Classification of Nomads

178
361
233
621

The constant changes of the social structure make a proper classification of Bedouin society extremely complicated.

Bonné divides[5] the nomadic population into the following groups:

a. Desert Bedouin who are the genuine nomads roving over the vast areas lying between the Syrian desert in the north and the center of the Arabian peninsula in the south, and who engage in camel-raising exclusively.

b. Steppe Bedouin who, in addition to camels, also keep large numbers of cows, sheep and goats, and wander in the steppe, nearer the cultivation.

---

1. Jamali, 1934, p. 67
2. ברסלבסקי, 1946, pp. 89 – 100
3. Konikoff, 1946, p. 18
4. Oppenheim, 1943, p. 291
5. Bonné, 1948, pp. 322 seq.

361 c. Semi-Bedouin who occupy a position between Bedouin and Fellahin. They are already engaged in agriculture. While they still live in tents, they ultimately turn to the construction of permanent huts and houses.

178 233 621

Muller introduces the following classifications [1]

1. Nomadic Tribes

361 233

a. Camel tribes, so called because they engage primarily in camel-breeding although they possess flocks of sheep. They are the true Bedouin of Syria, all belonging to The Aneseh and Shammar groups. [2] Their mobility enables them to maintain a 600 - 800 kil. radius of migration. They wander in the desert from September till late in June when they return to the border of the cultivated zone in order to trade their surplus livestock and purchase necessary supplies. They do not display the least interest in sedentarization. [3]

X [166]

b. Sheep tribes, so called because they are chiefly preoccupied with intensive sheep-raising. The need for water for their animals restricts their wandering in time and in space. Early in the spring, before the

---

1. Muller, 1931, pp. 96 seq.
2. The study of V. Muller is based on his observations of tribal life in Syria.

186 3. This statement was made by V. Muller in 1931. It seems highly questionable that within 18 years the situation among the true Bedouin should have changed so radically to enable Fauaz Sha'lan, Chief of the Ruala, to declare that "all the tribesmen now wanted land" (for settlement) cf. New York Times, September 6, 1949. Even changing circumstances have never had such an effect on the conservative mentality of the Bedouin, and it seems, therefore, that the declaration of Sha'lan, made for political reasons, must be taken with a note of caution.

BEDOUINS MJ4

excessive heat sets in, the sheep tribes come back to the cultivated zone. Frequently their radius of movement does not exceed a dozen of miles. The members of the sheep tribes are in regular contact with the settled population and practically all of them evince more or less an interest in settlement. [166]

361 233

2. Semi-Sedentary Tribes

While the semi-sedentary tribes continue to breed livestock, they are already attached to the soil which they cultivate.

361 233 241

Part of the tribe engages in cultivation, while the other tends to the flocks. After the season of ploughing and sowing is over, the tribe gets on the move in search of pastures, leaving behind only the necessary number of men for guard and irrigation duties. Early in spring the semi-sedentary come back to their fields. Right after harvesting they begin sowing the summer crops. They spend the winter and spring in tents; during the summer they live in huts which they make out of trunks and branches of trees. Village settlement is a rare exception.

3. Sedentary Groups

361

This group is the least numerous and important. The members live in towns and villages like settled people with the difference that they still retain their tribal character.

---

361 Whatever categories the various observers introduce for the stratification of Bedouin society, the chief criteria are:

a. the radius and duration of the annual migrations

b. the type of livestock on which the pastoral economy of a group is based

c. the extent of attachment to the soil.

Nomad society in the Arab Middle East includes groups which are separated by centuries of evolutionary development. On the one side we have the true desert Bedouin who breeds camels exclusively, has a wide radius of migration and no attachment to the soil and on the other side we find the almost settled semi-nomad whose regular agricultural activities have led him to cultivation and a subsequent limitation of animal husbandry.

Demographic facts and figures

162 Demographic statistics of the Middle East are available only for Turkey, Egypt and Israel (Palestine). Population figures for Arabia, Iraq, Syria and Jordan are computed on the basis of estimates and cannot be considered reliable. In 1947 censuses were taken for the first time in Iraq and Syria, but the accuracy of these reports may be seriously questioned.

The nomadic element constitutes about one third of the population in the Arabian peninsula and about one tenth in Iraq and Syria.[1] This latter estimate must exclude semi-nomads in an

---

1. Review of Economic Conditions, 1951, p. 8

68: Neubart S-4 (no date) 1952 M1 Middle East
BEDOUINS MJ4

619 The tradesmen pay no attention to political boundary lines. When convenient, however, the Bedouin will take advantage of the frontier. An ambitious government collector of sheep and camel taxes, for example, may make it advisable for the tribes to assume a different nationality merely by shifting their tents into a region where the government authorities may be less exacting. 1)

619 X166 656 The nomads thus represent a national problem, and tribal settlement on land has become an important domestic issue in the Bedouin inhabited areas. On the one hand, the governments have checked and tried to eliminate the abuses perpetrated by the nomads, and on the other they have encouraged the process of transition to agriculture. Raiding was stopped, collection of khuwa outlawed, encroachment on areas of cultivation prohibited.

The positive measures for solving the Bedouin problem were on the whole inadequate, but settlement was given an appreciable impetus by the distribution of land, extension of financial aid, education and technical advice.

CHAPTER V

●●361 X166 The conflicting attitudes towards the Bedouin problem

There are two, basically opposing attitudes towards the Bedouin problem:

a. that of the realists who propose settlement of the nomads

---

1. Report, 1923-24, p. 23

JORDAN
M1 Middle East
Bedouins MJ4
361
166x

whose desert economy and social organization have collapsed; and

b. that of the romanticists who are more interested in saving the "noble" Bedouin society than suggesting alternate means of livelihood for the nomads who have suffered a serious economic crisis.

These two approaches to the Bedouin problem are reflected in and interesting and instructive argument between Eliahu Epstein and Major J. C. Glubb in connection with recent changes among the nomads of Transjordan.[1] Epstein stated that there has been since the end of World War I a progressive impoverishment among the Bedouin of Transjordan. The pastoral economy, based on camel-breeding and sheep-raising, has according to him undergone a serious crisis because the camel cannot hold its ground in the face of competition with modern means of transportation. Sheep-raising, on the other hand, is more profitable when practiced in permanent settlements which do not have to suffer livestock losses on account of raids. Epstein further points out that Bedouin migrations have become restricted since the boundary lines were drawn in the desert. In times of drought the nomads cannot save their animals any more, simply by moving them into regions where rains are more abundant. Raiding which constituted an additional source of income for the Bedouin has been outlawed. Epstein's

361
166x
434

---

1. Epstein, 1938, pp. 228-236
Glubb, 1938, pp. 448-454
Epstein, 1939, pp. 177 seq.

BEDOUINS MJ4
JORDAN
361
X166
434

answer to the problems of the Bedouin is their rapid settlement on land.

Glubb stated that the economic condition of the Transjordan tribesmen is not critical. In the old days the Bedouin had to rely on the merchants who used to come into the desert, purchase the camels and take them to the market. The establishment of public security has enabled the Bedouin to take their animals across the territory of hostile tribes and sell them directly, thus cutting out the middle-man's share of the profit. While the demand for camels for long-distance transport has been reduced, the camel market has according to Glubb not been destroyed. There is still a considerable demand for camels to be used in agricultural work. The chief customer, however, is the butcher's shop, particularly in Egypt where camel's meat is consumed in great quantities. Sheep always enjoy a ready market. The tribesmen seem poor to many Europeans, but the Bedouin of Transjordan are financially more prosperous than most Oriental peasants, and they enjoy more material comforts than they did before the First World War.

Glubb is critical of Epstein's view that the drought years of 1931 and 1932 have made the issue of Bedouin settlement in Transjordan urgent. Otherwise the statements of Glubb lack realism. He is gravely concerned about that modern civilization may do to a "simple, smiling people." Glubb represents the view of the British "romanticists" who deplore the vanishing of the "glorious" desert-tent Bedouin society.

BEDOUINS MJ4
JORDAN
361
166
178

Another example of this attitude is the statement of General Sir Percy Cox before a meeting of the Royal Central Asian Society: "The true Bedouin are attractive people, and I hope they will not be swept away too rapidly with the spread of civilization."[1]

This type of approach has often found its way into official records of the British Colonial Administration. In the Special Report on the Administration of Iraq we find the statement that "the tribe has little to gain and much to lose by settling."[2] The report becomes slightly ridiculous when it refers to the body-lice and the unwashed clothes of the Bedouin as "clean dirt."[3]

Epstein's study, however, must be subjected to criticism on several points. He attributes the progressive impoverishment of the desert Bedouin largely to the decline of the camel market and the tracing of the political boundary lines. While recognizing that not all the Bedouin can be reduced to a sedentary life, he maintains that the problems of Transjordan can be solved only by settlement of the nomadic population. There seems to be an exaggeration in the significance which Epstein attaches to an economic crisis among the Bedouin. Developments clearly show that the nomads are quick in making changes within their pastoral economy, from camel-breeding to sheep-raising, but reluctant to take up cultivation. Although camel economy is disintegrating, this phenomenon in itself does not necessarily lead to a permanent impov-

---

1. Glubb, 1935, p. 31
2. Special Report, 1932, p. 185
3. ibid.

BEDOUINS MJ4
JORDAN

361 x166 178 erishment of the nomads. The economic crisis may be temporary, till adjustments within the nomad economy have been carried out. The need for the camel has declined, but the importance of the sheep and goats has remained unchanged. Sheep and goats supply the people of the area with meat, dairy products and wool.

In fact, the suggestion may be ventured that in the near future the importance of the pastoral economy will considerably increase when the Arab masses will change to a healthier, more balanced diet which presently lacks vital protein elements.

According to Epstein the transition from nomadism to agriculture is made urgent by the unprofitability of camel-breeding, stoppage of raiding(heretofore a source of revenue), and the partitioning of the Syrian Desert. While these phenomena undoubtedly had serious repercussions in the Bedouin world, they do not seem to be chiefly responsible for the disintegration of tribal society and pastoral economy.

CHAPTER VI

233 178 The Camel Economy of the Nomads and Recent Changes

In the past the economy of the Bedouin was principally based on camel-breeding. With the construction of railways in the Middle East and the introduction of the automobile in the desert, the value of the camel declined rapidly and substantially. Prices

233 only 3 437 camels,[1] and within a short time this trade became so
178 insignificant that since 1937 camel export figures were no longer
439 listed in official statistical abstracts. Although 40 000 nomads of Transjordan are classified as full Bedouin, they cannot possibly live on camel-breeding. The following figures will show the dwindling camel stock in Transjordan:

1927	13 800	2)
1929	33 500	2)
1935	3 400	2)
1943	6 000	2)
1948	2 500	3)

Figures are probably understated as information on animal holdings was furnished for taxing purposes, but they indicate the trend.

The decline of camel trade and the slump in market prices have severely hit the camel-breeding Bedouin. Transjordan was selected as an example, but the same phenomenon is apparent among the nomads of Syria and Iraq.

Changes within the pastoral economy

● 361 The camel Bedouin coming from the Arabian desert into the
x 178 lands of the Fertile Crescent will sooner or later become a sheep
166 nomad. This transformation has been going on for centuries, long before the decline of the camel market made it necessary. The change was in the past an adaptation of the pastoral economy to

---

1. Epstein, 1939, p. 180
2. International Yearbooks of Agricultural Statistics for 1931/2 and 1940/41
3. Final Report, 1949, Part II, p. 10

BEDOUINS MJ4 361 178 166x 233

the natural conditions of the environment, while in recent years it has also been an adjustment to economic circumstances.

The type of animal industry is determined by geographic factors and climatic conditions. In Iraq "in many parts of the alluvial lowlands, terrain is too soft and swampy, so that these animals (camels) are few outside the steppes."[1] Syria, especially the northern part, where rigorous winters frequently occur, is not an ideal region for camel-breeding while in parts of the Arabian desert sheep and goats cannot survive.

233 2)439

The profitability and the increase of sheep and goat rearing is apparent from the following Transjordan export-trade figures:

	1937	1939	1941	1943
goats	6 988	7 637	32 638	31 041
sheep	12 064	37 896	56 735	52 487

While the camel trade declined, the sheep and goat business has been constantly rising.

233 659 361

Mr. Epstein states[3] that sheep raising is more lucrative when practiced in permanent settlements which do not have to fear losses incurred as result of inter-tribal raiding. With the establishment of Public Security, however, raids have practically ceased, and the desert has been made secure. Today, throughout the area the animal industry is largely in the hands of the nomads.[4]

---

1. Fisher, 1950, p. 362
2. Koulikoff, 1946, p. 112 Table 16
3. Epstein, 1938, p. 228
4. In Iraq the breeding of sheep is practiced almost exclusively by the nomadic population, cf. Royal Institute, 1950, p. 259

361 The pastoral people are fulfilling an important economic function
433 by:

a. supplying the home markets with essential products, and

b. furnishing valuable export articles.

237 Iraqi wool is considered of good quality and finds a ready market
439 in the United States of America and in continental Europe for carpet manufacture.[1] In 1947 Iraq exported 2794 tons of wool at I D 372 349.[2] In 1946 and again in 1948 the wool export was about three times that of 1947.[3] Syria exports products like wool, butter, hides, etc.

233 The following statements will illustrate the valuable contri-
361 bution which the nomads are making to the general economy:
433

"The Bedouin are experts in the breeding of livestock and form a class who afford a valuable contribution to the economic life of Transjordan." 4) "Their (Bedouin of Iraq) occupation of raising livestock is vital to the economy of the country." 5) "Syria cannot afford to lose the meat, milk and wool which are derived from the harvesting of the desert herbage." 6)

Thus in all the countries of the Fertile Crescent, livestock breeding, the primary occupation of the nomad population, appears to be an essential and lucrative industry.

---

1. Gamble, 1949, p. 20
2. ibid. p. 13
3. Data Book, 1951, p. 40
4. Report, 1938, p. 318
5. Jawad, 1945, p. 7
6. Report of the United States-Syrian Agricultural Mission, 1947, p. 23

CHAPTER VII

The Boundary Lines and their Bearing on Bedouin Migration

B 131 361

With the conclusion of the First World War and the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire the Syrian Desert was partitioned among four new states: Syria, Iraq, Transjordan and Saudi Arabia.

Epstein states[1] that the political boundary lines impose limitations on the Bedouin who can no longer freely wander over vast areas. In times of severe drought they cannot migrate with their flocks across the border where rains may have been more abundant. As an example he cites the case of a number of large Transjordanian tribes who were accustomed to have their winter quarters in Wadi Sirhan, which is now part of Saudi Arabia. New political conditions force the Bedouin to remain with their herds in the cold plains of Moab and Edom. Epstein, however, fails to explain why the tribes in question could not avail themselves of the provisions made in the Saudi Arabian (Nejd)-Transjordan agreements of 1925 and 1927 for cross-border migrations of the Bedouin. Article 9 of the Treaty of Friendship and Bon Voisinage concluded in 1927 at Jedda between Saudi Arabia and Transjordan reads as follows:

B 131 221

M 648

B 131 221

> "The tribes of the two parties which habitually frequent both sides of the frontier for purposes of grazing or "musabala" shall be free to move from place to place in

---

1. Epstein, 1938, p. 229

In our days sedentarisation is the product of the nomad's contact with settled society during the regular periods of his encampment on the outskirts of the cultivated land. 166X 177

At present, the tribal population of Syria, Iraq, Palestine (Israel) and Transjordan (Jordan) is in all stages of transition to a sedentary existence. A. S. Kirkbridge has outlined[1] the various stages that the Transjordan nomad passes on his journey to the settled life of an agriculturalist. With insignificant changes the description of the steps can be made applicable to the process of sedentarisation as a whole. 166X 178

Stages of Sedentarisation 166X

1. The true desert Bedouin, raising mainly camels,[2] lives in a world where nature makes cultivation impossible. He migrates in accordance with the existence of water and grazing and supplements his meager income by raiding if conditions permit. He despises the villagers. 221 434 361
2. In spite of the contempt that the Bedouin have for the settled peasants they come to realise that the fellah lives a more comfortable life and enjoys a better diet, compared to the standards of the nomad. 609 434
3. The next step is the occupation of cultivable land by the nomadic tribe. Agriculture is practiced only as a 166X 361 241

---

1. Kirkbride, 1945, March-April
2. Kirkbride does not discuss the Bedouin that came from Arabia subsisting exclusively on camel-breeding. Since practically all Transjordanian nomads have crossed the first stage, the conversion of exclusive camel economy to mixed pastoral economy of sheep and camel-breeding.

X166 supplemental means of livelihood. The tribesmen stay on
●361 their fields only to harvest and then to sow next year's
241 crop. Then they migrate with their flocks in search of pastures. But they soon realise the drawbacks of protracted absence:

a. the grain will be eaten by birds and insects before it takes root

b. neighbors will graze their herds on the fields.

Sooner or later the amateur cultivator comes to the conclusion that it will pay him to remain nearer his land.

X166 c. The decision to remain close to the cultivated land
241 implies the first real change in the nomad's mode of living:

a. the radius of migration must be reduced

b. the restriction of movement, in turn, makes it mandatory to reduce the amount of livestock in proportion to the grazing areas within the limited wandering orbit.

c. the fewer the animals, the greater the dependence of the tribe on cultivation.

X166 At this phase the nomads still live in tents. But in
178 raising crops, they adopt more and more the methods of the sedentary neighbors.

437 In the trading of the surplus grain the behavior of the

Iraq BEDOUINS MJ4

The conditions of land tenure in Arabia are obscure. Most of 423
the land is still utilised by the nomadic tribes for grazing their flocks. When the settlers are assigned land, it is not clarified who holds the title, the state, the tribe or the individual cultivator.

Although Arabia is still predominantly pastoral, the nomadic 361
character of the population is being rapidly changed as the result 166x
of government action and under the impact of increasing contact with the West.

Iraq (Mesopotamia)[1]

Iraq has a history of sedentarisation that goes back to the 174
19th century when the Turks began to take steps towards reducing 166x
the nomads to a sedentary agricultural existence.

Up to 1869 it was the Bedouin policy of the Ottoman authorities to crush or settle the tribes, to break or conciliate their leaders.[2] Government action, however, was not accompanied by any concrete plans of providing for the Bedouin alternate means of sustenance.

Midhat Pasha, who became Wali of Baghdad in 1869, approached the issue more constructively. He viewed tribal settlement as an agrarian problem. Bedouin cultivation was encouraged by the sale of state-land on reasonable terms. Midhat Pasha felt that only settlement can permanently solve the tribal problem. He was con-

---

1. Certain parts of former Mesopotamia like Deir ez-Zor belong to modern Syria. When an instance of nomad settlement in the Deir ez-Zor area refers to times previous to the establishment of modern Iraq it was included in this chapter although the locality may be now Syrian territory.
2. Ireland, 1938, p. 90

X166 tributed among them, and the construction of houses facilitated.[1]

In 1934 the tribal office of the High Commissioner prepared a vast program of settlement. The project provided for:

a. the construction of 500 houses in the Upper Jezirah for those Bedouin ready to settle
b. the digging of 12 new wells so that the nomads should not be forced to wander in search of water
c. the assignment of technicians to teach the Bedouin modern methods of breeding and feeding animals.[2]

In 1935 a program was formulated for the settlement of 500 Bedouin families in the villages on the edge of the desert and supply them with specialists to teach them the techniques of agricultural work.[3]

All these attempts of the government to induce the nomads to take up agriculture had little success. In spite of the catastrophic livestock losses no unusual or large scale movement towards sedentarization was apparent. More discernible, however, was a change within the pastoral economy itself, camel-breeding having been progressively abandoned in favor of sheep-raising. Also the slow and gradual process of sedentarization, which started long before the modern government measures, continued.

● 361 241 X166 The Weld Ali had already in the 1860's begun cultivation.[4] At present part of the tribe is in the process of becoming perma-

---

1. Oriente Moderno, XIV 1934, p. 285
2. ibid.
3. Oriente Moderno, XV 1935, p. 125
4. Oppenheim, 1939, p. 85

SYRIA BEDOUINS MJ4

nently settled in the neighborhood of Homs and Hama. The Kemese, (part of the Sba'a) began agriculture after the First World War.[1] The Hesene who had started cultivation already at the end of the 19th century,[2] are settling down in the villages which they own east of Homs.[3] Several thousand tribesmen of the Fed'an work in the fields belonging to the estates of their sheikh Mejbem, although the majority of the tribesmen prefer livestock-breeding to cultivation.[4] In the Jezirah, in Hauran, in the Homs-Hama-Aleppo region and in other parts of the country tribes are abandoning their nomadic mode of life and begin to engage in agriculture, first as supplementary, then as primary occupation. Ultimately they become fully settled peasants.

361 241 166X

This process has been going on ever since the Bedouin have infiltrated into Syria. In recent years the slow pace of transition was somewhat quickened under the impact of rapidly changing conditions in Syria, but not as the result of economic adversities which plagued the nomads for a season or two. A catastrophe in the pastoral economy will not cause the Bedouin to turn to agricultural pursuits. After the drought years of 1931 and 1932 the situation of the Bedouin was desperate, but the abundant season of 1933 made the nomads forget the sufferings of preceding

361 241 166X 178

---

1. Oppenheim, 1939, p. 85
2. ibid., p. 84
3. ibid., p. 85
4. Hassan, 1930, p. 496

361
241 years. There was not much of a response to the efforts of the
X166 government during 1934 and 1935 to encourage settlement on land.
178

Where sedenterization took place it was the social process
X166 of assimilation, stimulated by economic, social and political
178 factors. Where societies meet, the phenomenon of assimilation is inevitable; one section of the social group may be more rapidly affected than the other, but even if no extraordinary conditions arise, the evolutionary process of assimilation and subsequent sedenterization will take its course and ultimately embrace all strata of society.

361 Tribal leadership spearheaded the movement towards sedenter-
X166 ization which by 1935 was sufficiently advanced among the tribal groups of the Aleppo-Homs-Hama region for 14 tribes representing 3 500 tents or 15 000 individuals to be placed by the authorities under a regime of ordinary administration.[1)]

423 For those nomads who are at present ready to settle down,
425 the greatest problem is that of land-tenure. Bedouin tribes as a
X166 whole have more land at their disposal than they can possibly exploit by agricultural cultivation. The area inhabited by the nomads is not less than 10 693 000 hectares.[2)] However, when the tribesmen are willing to take up agriculture, they find that all the tribal land has become the private property of the sheikhs.

---

1. Rapport, 1936, pp. 26-27
2. Salem, 1950 p. 365

423 general. The idea of encouraging small and medium landholdings was incorporated in the new Syrian Constitution of 1950.

578 427 659 In the summer of 1952 violent clashes occurred in Syria between tenants and the agents of the big landlords, a development which testifies to the tenseness of the situation. Angry complaints were voiced in the Syrian Parliament against the government which does not challenge the encroachment on State Domains by the rich landowning families, and it was alleged that in the Jezirah tribal sheikhs connive with them by leasing many land on which the tribesmen enjoyed traditional grazing rights. 1)

Failure to make provisions for adequate conditions of land holding tends to retard tribal settlement. The enactment of sweeping land reforms, however, cannot be envisaged as long as the few, but powerful, land-owning families control the administration, and make even the allocation of State lands to small owners difficult.

Hashemite Palestine

162 361 Since World War I there have been no true Bedouin in Palestine, only semi-nomads. In the 1930's 47 961 out of the 64 552 nomads of Palestine 2) were encamped in the Beersheba district of the Negev, the rest scattered in the other parts of the country.

361 233 The tribes of Beersheba are the Tarabin, Tayaha, Azazme,

---

1. New York Times, August 13, 1952
2. Report of 1931 census of Palestine

Jabarat, Ramajna and the Saidiyin. Until recently these nomads were chiefly engaged in sheep and goat rearing, while camel-breeding has been progressively abandoned. 361 233

Already in the 1930's all the Beersheba tribes were in an advanced stage of the process of transition to permanent settlement. While before the First World War the Negev Bedouin depended almost exclusively on stock-breeding, in 1931 42 868 of them claimed cultivation, and only 5 113 animal rearing, as their chief source of livelihood.[1] 166½ 233

This development was the result of a series of economic factors: the decline of the camel market,[2] successive years of drought and famine in the Negev,[3] the increased value attached to land in the wake of Zionist land purchases and the ready market that agricultural produce found in the growing Jewish settlements. 178 166½

Many Bedouin began to attend to cultivation in a more regular fashion although they remained for the time being semi-nomads wandering with their flocks except for the seasons of sowing and harvesting. 361 241 166½

The sheikhs and more prominent members of the tribes began 342

---

1. Report of 1931 census of Palestine
2. This loss was largely compensated by breeding other types of livestock.
3. More than half of the years 1871 - 1939 were seasons of drought. The war years 1914-18 constituted a continuous period of famine the severity of which the Negev had not experienced prior to the war. cf:

ארנס א-ארזי-ס, 1938, ע' 180-181

342 as early as the 1930's to have stone houses constructed for their private use.[1]

361 During the years of prosperity in the middle of the 30's a 241 number of Bedouin groups in the Negev made use of mechanized harvesters which they borrowed from the Jewish colonists of Gederah.[2] Not all the tribesmen, however, were actively engaged in agriculture. As late as 1942 the Terahin had their lands cultivated by tenant farmers and day laborers from South Judean villages.[3]

166 Among the Bedouin of Northern Palestine the trend towards 241 sedenterisation dates back to the 1860's, when many of the tribes- 243 men began to engage in agriculture.[4] In the 1930's all the nomads of the Sharon, Jezreel and the Galilee were in the possession of land which was cultivated either by the tribesmen or tenant farmers.[5] Contrary to the Bedouin of the Beersheba district the nomads of Northern Palestine were quick to learn the value of law and order.[6] Under the influence of neighboring fellahin the tribesmen have become increasingly attached to the land and pre-occupied with agriculture. Although methods of cultivation remained very primitive, an improvement of conditions has been observed since the 1930's.[7]

---

1. Ashkenazi, 1938, p. 17
2. ibid.
3. Poliak, 1942
4. Ashkenazi, 1938, p. 15
5. ibid., pp. 3-4
6. ibid., p. 16
7. ibid., p. 17

PALESTINE ISRAEL BEDOUINS MJ 4

The British Mandatory regime had no concrete tribal settlement policy although assistance was rendered to the Bedouin, whenever necessary, by means of relief measures such as employment in public works, monetary gifts, assignment of land, etc. 657

Six desert schools were founded in the vicinity of Beersheba to serve the educational needs of the southern tribes. No special Bedouin school was established in the North. The nomads who were concerned with the education of their children had to send them to the government school. 658 361

Settlement Policy of the Government of Israel

Similarly to the policies of Ibn Saud the government of Israel is pursuing a vigorous policy of transforming the remaining 17 500 nomads of the Negev into settled communities of farmers and pastoralists. 166 656

The Israeli authorities have closed the southern border to prevent Bedouin infiltration from across the frontier.

After the occupation of Beersheba in 1948, sheikhs representing 16 large and small tribes pledged their loyalty to the State of Israel. In the Arab-Israel war of 1948/49 they were friendly or at least neutral.[1]

The following extract from a report will already illustrate the changes which are taking place among the nomads of the Negev as result of Israel's Bedouin settlement policy: 166 361

---

1. Lourie, Palestine Post, November 24, 1949

ISRAEL BEDOUINS MJ4

361 "The sixteen tribes recognized as bona fide residents of
X166 Israel have all been counted and are now given identity cards. They are being assisted in ploughing and breeding cattle — three tractors have been recently allotted to them by the Department of Agriculture, and Bedouins have already learned to drive them — as the beginning of a long term scheme to convert these tribesmen from a nomadic way of life to that of settled cultivators or fellahin. Migration of Bedouins, for centuries the scourge of the country, is being stopped, and the tribes are being settled in certain definite areas." 1)

X166 Of course, not all the Bedouin of the Negev are ready to settle down permanently. In the summer of 1950 a number of tribes crossed voluntarily into Jordan because their pastures in the Negev had shrunk to the point of inadequacy on account of a serious drought. Under an agreement of the Israel-Jordan Armistice Commission the Bedouin were granted the permission to re-enter Israeli territory (not later than July 1951); none of them, however, returned, preferring to stay in Jordan where they could continue their nomadic mode of living. 2)

361 425 Practically all the remaining nomads of Israel are by now settled down to a regular agricultural and pastoral existence.

Early in 1951 the Ministry of Agriculture allocated to the Bedouin I L 20 000 for the ploughing of about 50 000 dunums of uncultivated land in the Negev, because the Government of Israel was aware of the difficulties which confronted the tribes whose winter crops had been destroyed by the severe drought. 3)

---

1. Lourie, Palestine Post, November 24, 1949
2. The Jewish Agency's Digest, 1951 b, p. 1734
3. The Jewish Agency's Digest, 1951 a, p. 1071

BEDOUINS MJ4
M1 Middle East
JORDAN

Transjordan (Jordan)

Since the Bedouin invasions of the seventh century Transjordan has been a country of nomads. According to statistics the majority of the people are settled, but in reality even the sedentary population of Transjordan is to a certain extent tribal-nomadic, and the inhabitants of the towns and villages south of Ajloun[1] share with the Bedouin their language, customs and tribal organization.

Not all the nomads of Transjordan are of Bedouin origin, many of them having descended from settled fellahin who gradually adopted Bedouin patterns of living. This unique phenomenon, not found to such an extent in any other region of the Middle East, is not limited to the Muslim community. Christians, settled in the towns of Salt, Kerak and Madabah, found it necessary or convenient to form themselves into nomadic tribes and take up a pastoral mode of existence.[2]

The pages of Transjordan history during the 19th century are filled with the inter-tribal wars which were fought between the Adwan and Beni Sakhr. The Beni Sakhr captured all lands of Eastern Belqa and forced the Adwan back to the Jordan valley. They left the fellahin to continue the cultivation of the land in return for an annual tribute.[3] The tribesmen returned to

---

1. With the exception of places like Amman where most inhabitants are newcomers.
2. Oppenheim, 1943, p. 184
3. ibid., p. 237

BEDOUINS MJ4
M1 Middle East
JORDAN

1174 their nomadic life in the desert, raising camels, sheep and goats.

The first to become interested in agriculture was Sheikh Sattan ibn Fais. Although he personally remained a wandering nomad with his Beni Sakhr tribesmen, he attended to the supervision of his estates at Umm el-'Amad, north east of Madabah.

361 Pere Jaussen reported in 1908 [1] that already at that time
241 small tribes [2] of Gilead, the Jordan valley, Belqa and northern Moab were engaged in agricultural work.

423 Most of the cultivable tracts of the tribal land had already
425 prior to the First World War become the private property of the sheikhs who acquired those lands simply by occupying them [3] as they belonged to nobody. Another method of increasing land-holdings was by encroachment on adjacent fields and putting them under cultivation. By this latter system a large territory, originally belonging to the Adwan, was acquired by Sheikh Sattan and his sons. [4] After World War I many sheikhs purchased Giftlik land [5] from the government on favorable terms.

---

1. Jaussen, 1908, pp. 237-8 and pp. 240-55
2. All the tribes of Transjordan are small when compared with the powerful Iraqi and Syrian tribes such as the Ruala (4 250 tents) or the Sba'a (3 400 tents) cf. Fisher, 1950, p. 116. The Beni Sakhr, the largest tribe of Transjordan, has about 1 140 tents.
3. They set foot on a certain terrain, belonging to nobody (ارض سبسبة) and declared it personal property (ارض سبسبة) by virtue of occupation.
4. Jaussen, 1908, pp. 136-7
5. Giftlik is the land which had belonged to the Turkish Sultan and become government property after World War I.

M1 Middle East
BEDOUINS MJ4
JORDAN

000 breeding.

361 A decisive change in the opposite direction occurred in the
241 economic structure of the Howeitat when their two Sheikhs Abian
721 ibn-Jazi and Audah abu-Tayy evinced more interest in raiding than in peaceful agricultural pursuits. In a short time the Howeitat became one of the most warlike tribes in North Arabia and the Syrian Desert. Cultivation was discarded, the tribes-men rented their farms to fellahin and tenants, and they themselves roamed the desert.[1]

X166 Since the end of the First World War the Howeitat have been
241 reverting to the land. The tribesmen again engaged in the agricultural work, and their transition to a completely settled existence should not be difficult to accomplish.

423 By 1931 all sections of the Beni Hasan[2] were settled on their
X166 land, in that year 5 000 title deeds having been issued to the
241 tribal cultivators.[3] In the drought years of 1932 and 1933 the flocks of the Beni Hasan were severely hit. Like the situation among all the big tribes of Transjordan, the Beni Hasan were economically ruined, but unlike them they were willing to take up cultivation. Government financial assistance was requested to enable the tribe to develop its fertile lands, but no constructive help was forthcoming.

---

1. Père Jaussen observed the Howeitat in 1908 after they had resumed their nomadic existence. But his statement that "les Howeitat n'ont jamais touché la charrue" (The Howeitat never touched the plow) (cf. Jaussen, 1908, p. 241) is incorrect.
2. The Beni Hasan have about 860 tents and dwell in 'Ajloun, one of the most fertile parts of Transjordan. They own about 372 000 dunams of land.
3. Report, 1931, p. 193

BEDOUINS MJ4

361 The Committee of the first seminar recognised that, at the
652 present time, the financial provisions for the nomadic tribes
648 are relatively inadequate and submitted the recommendation that a higher percentage of the budget of each State should be allocated for the social and economic needs of the nomadic popula-
648 tion.[1] The same Committee recommended that:
166X

> "the policy of the Arab States should aim at the settlement of a number of tribes by distributing them in the arable areas owned by the states and allotting small-holdings to individuals. In this connection the Committee refers to the existence especially in the Syrian Gezirah and Iraq, of extensive areas for the application of agricultural projects which should be based on the most up-to-date techniques of agriculture." [2]

CHAPTER XIII

361 Conclusions and Summary of the Settlement Problems

Nomadism has been chiefly responsible for the decline of agricultural prosperity in the Middle East.

361 The Bedouin tribes have always, through social and economic
X166 assimilation, become absorbed by the settled population. The process of sedentarization, the gradual transition from the nomadic mode of life to a settled existence, is a sociological phenomenon, inseparably connected with the history of Bedouin migrations from the desert into the fertile lands on its borders In the past few decades the pace of the evolutionary process of transition has been considerably quickened under the impact of economic, social and political stimuli, mutually interlocked and overlapping.

---

1. UN Social Welfare Seminar, 1950, p. 36
2. Ibid., p. 37

361
233
178
241

Economic

The Pastoral economy of the Bedouin [1] has been seriously affected by the rapid development of the area. Former pasture lands are increasingly brought under cultivation with subsequent restriction of tribal grazing areas.

Although an exaggerated significance has been attached to the effects of the declining demand for the camel, this factor has dealt a severe blow to the economy of the true desert Bedouin who subsisted in the past exclusively on camel-breeding.

Social

178
621

Tribal society has progressively disintegrated as the result of the sheikh's emergence as a big landowner. The interest which tribal leadership displays in agricultural life, is bound to influence the thinking and acting of the tribesmen. Sooner or later, they will follow the examples set by their sheikhs and settle down.

---

1. The statement of Alfred Bonne that "the term Bedouin economy is a contradiction in itself" and that "this economy is no economy in the accepted sense of the word" (Bonne, 1948, p. 346) may be exaggerated because the nomads make a valuable contribution to the economy by:
   a. profitably utilizing the scanty patches of grass that grow for fleeting moments over widely separated stretches of desert area, a resource which would remain otherwise exploited
   b. by supplying the people of the area with their needs of meat, wool and dairy products
   c. producing for local industry and export trade items like wool, skins, hides, and live animals and their edible produce.

178
621 As a member of a well-knit patriarchal society the individual [illegible] enjoyed a relative sense of security, and his precarious existence in the desert was made possible by tribal solidarity and experienced and devoted leadership. With the dissolution of the traditional ties the Bedouin may ultimately come to realise the benefits that will accrue to him as part of a new social order, that of the settled community.

Political

166
657 The administrations of Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Syria, Jordan
361 and Israel have been concerned with integrating the nomadic element within their borders in the national community.

Saudi Arabia and Israel have formulated and are carrying out definite settlement policies, while the other governments of the area stimulate sedentarization by the creation of suitable conditions. Inadequate as the measures of the governments may be in themselves, they are bound to show results, once the disintegration of the tribal group is sufficiently advanced.

In order to make Bedouin sedentarization a lasting success, government-sponsored settlement projects must be designed and carried out.

For a long time the issue of "settling the tribes" has been a political slogan in the cities of the Arab countries, but only infrequently have the administrations of Syria, Iraq and Jordan taken concrete steps in direction of Bedouin settlement.

1: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala
Bedouins MS4

XXIV

With the Tai' and Shammar Bedouins

LUCK FAVOURED US in eluding the vigilance of the French on our second attempt to reach the grazing grounds of the Tai' Bedouins under their *sheykh,* Muhamed Abd-er-Rachman at-Tai'.

His great camp spread out in a verdant valley, threaded by a long chain of rain pools. The snow-covered mountain ranges of Kurdistan, stretching beyond the Turkish frontier, formed a picturesque background. Camels and great flocks of sheep grazed over the desert, which recent rains had turned into rich pasture. Dotted about in groups were the black tents of the Bedouins. A horseman came to meet us. A foal, so it seemed in the distance, pranced round its mother, but as the rider drew nearer, we saw that the playful creature was a tame gazelle. The Bedouin rode a magnificent mare, that pranced on her feet like a dancer.

"Where is the abode of our host who will receive us?" I enquired. He pointed to the black outline of the largest tent, which showed from behind a ridge some distance away.

"Ha-wallah—by God—there dwells the Generous One!" He looked us over for a moment, then greeting us curtly, turned his horse and galloped away, the gazelle after him.

609 marry, but that he required two camels as a present for her father to win his consent. The two camels which I and my servant were riding would be perfectly suitable, he hinted. When we halted for food at midday or in the evening, he would sit down, leaning his elbow on his saddle-bags beside him on the ground, and give his orders. "Hobble that camel, unload that gear." For with all their frank and open manners and their honourable customs, bedouins can be haughty and overbearing when they feel they have the whip-hand. Qasim was a man of limited intelligence, and a venal blackguard.

All the same, he had a sense of humour. Twenty years later, when I was commanding the Arab Legion, Qasim was arrested by the police, doubtless for some heinous crime. "You don't know who I am!" he said when the police came to take him away. "I'm the man who employed Glubb Pasha as a herdsman for my camel!"

361 Altogether it was with satisfaction that one morning we 609 emerged from a narrow valley in the sandy and rocky hills and 7/2 saw before us the dark green of the palm gardens, the little stone fort and the cluster of houses of the oasis of Kaf. The little fort was owned by Ibn Shaalan and garrisoned by his retainers, under the command of Salih ibn Uthman, a native of the oasis of Jauf. He greeted us with a kindness and consideration which was a pleasant contrast to the company of Qasim ash Shemam. The latter wished to return next day to his tribe, so I paid him off in the evening. But he shouted that the money was not enough and that he would seize our camels. Salih ibn Uthman intervened, and Qasim was persuaded to leave the room. Outside I could hear a loud altercation and a scuffle. Qasim disappeared during the night, taking with him a selection from our gear—my saddle and water-skin and Trad ibn Shaalan's warm gloves.

7/2 There was an Arab Legion post at Kaf, outside the village in a fortified camp on top of a steep hill. I paid them a visit and had tea with the officers. The evening was spent with Ibn Shaalan's retainers, sitting on the floor round the open hearth in the castle hall. On the glowing embers were ranged a row of coffee-pots. Outside howled that wind which had seemed to us so dreary as it whistled the stinging sand into our faces in the open desert.

k Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
Bedouins MJ4

CHAPTER II

Autumn Stirrings

It is early November, the 2nd to be accurate, and I have ordered 132
Salim al Muzaiyin to move his camp out into the *barr*, preparatory to 361
my joining him. We have had a week's steady south wind, clouds are banking up in the West, and we have had distant thunder and lightning. Most of the tribes have left water and are scattering over the hinterland in search of suitable grazing grounds, for the promise of rain is near. All the tent families go off on their own and camp in twos and threes, well apart from their neighbours (a mile or so perhaps), yet within sound of rifle-shot in case of an alarm, when all must come to the help of the person attacked.

The Badawin camped round Kuwait on the Shamiyah and Dasma 361
wells have already moved off, some to the Kabd region, some to 'Adan, some to the Huzaim and some to the Grain district. The Fidawiyah, under their Amir, Haif bin Hajraf, of the Sulaiman section of the 'Ajman, accompanied by Nahar and 'Ubaid al Mutalaqqim,* stout old warriors both, have gone to the Humatiyat region beyond Manaqish and the Shaqq, 60 miles from Kuwait. They have 223
cunningly chosen their region because the *hubara* have arrived in the Dibdibba, and hunting with hawks is a favourite sport. The Amir, and every self-respecting young brave, possesses his hawk, a *hurr* or *shdhin* (*sakar*, *lagger* or *shdhin* falcon), and all go out as they get opportunity, and bring back game for their wives' cooking-pot. Some, especially the 'Awazim, like also to hunt hare and gazelle with 224
salúqis, and great is the excitement when venison is brought home. 251
The young hunters go far from their tents, and if they find that the gazelle meat will not keep, they spread the carcase out in the shape of a mat, having removed the ribs and larger bones, and

* Was one of the forty who helped Bin Sa'ud to capture Riyadh, though not among the actual twenty-three who rushed Qasr 'Ajlan in the heart of the city.

k: Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait MI
Bedouins MJ4

at Wafra, so I am going to enquire his reasons for being there. Ibn Shaja'an has the unsavoury reputation of being cruel and overbearing to the Badawin, and like so many of his type—though a Mutairi by origin—he has been bred in Hufuf, and has imbibed many of the harsh characteristics of his master, 'Abdullah bin Jiluwi.* It is a curious fact that cruelty, conceit and a generally objectionable manner often spoil the character of a tribesman who for any length of time lives in a town.

We leave Kuwait at 12.30 p.m., and after a car run of 2½ hours we reach Araifjan. There is a cool *shamál* blowing, but in spite of moving with it, I need a sweater and *furwah* (sheepskin-lined, long Badawin cloth cloak with sleeves, fashionable among the 'Anizah and Northern Badawin). At 3 p.m. I catch the first glimpse of my camp. It is on the right of the rough track, and half a mile south of one of my previous camps of the year before. The tents are pitched among the thick *'arfaj* bushes which are a feature of Araifjan. Everything, however, is dry, and except for a few *gaghraf* bushes (*hamdh*) which are in full bloom, there is nothing green to be seen at all. No, I am wrong, for in the salty patches there are splashes of emerald green *harm* (also one of the *hamdh* family) which show up strangely in the dry countryside.

My camp of black hair tents is pitched in a long line, each tent facing south-east:

"A" is my tent; "B" that of my servant and huntsman; "C" is Salim's tent; "D" is Dhuwaihi's, the blind Azmi who resides with his two sons, Faláh and Násir (they are the shepherds); "E" is the tent of our *qasír* or neighbour, Sáleh, the Mutairi, who has asked permission to camp with Salim for a few days; "F" is my privy tent.

Very peaceful and quiet it all is—and I am not expected.

Suddenly we are seen, and there is much running to and fro, and carrying of *dushaks* and camel saddles from the women's quarters of Salim's tent to mine. Carpets and *galims* are quickly unrolled, the tent partitions (*gdta*) are fixed in place, and by the time the car draws up in front of my tent, everything is ready to give me welcome.

* Bin Jiluwi died on 31st October, 1935. He was according to Arab standards an undoubtedly great man, and a man of extraordinary courage. He was one of the twenty-three paladins who helped to seize Riyadh with Bin Sa'ud when the latter won his kingdom, but he was unfortunately a man without a spark of softness or mercy in his make-up.

k: Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
Bedouins MJ4

000 of Arabia lead makes for religion, and instils into the heart of man the greater virtues that make life worth living.

THE TRIBAL DÍRAH

619 [22] 312 361 Every Badawin tribe in Arabia has its *dírah* or tribal country, through which it roams with its camels in the autumn, winter and spring, and in which lie its permanent wells, the jealously treasured possessions of various sections of the tribe, on which these sections camp in summer.*

Let us take, for example, the great Mutair tribe ('Ilwa and Wasil) of North-East Arabia. Its *dírah* is roughly enclosed by the following boundaries:

On the north—By the Iraq Neutral Zone (Tawál al Dhafir) and the Kuwait frontier as far east as the Shaqq.
On the east—By the Shaqq depression and a line running south of same to Jariya al Sifla, Taraibi and al Khafaisat.
On the south—A rough line from the town of 'Anaiza, Zilfi, Majma'a to al Khafaisat including the town of Artawiyah.
On the west—A rough line from the Tawál al Dhafir (Iraq Neutral Zone) through Thamani (south end of Bátin) to Buraida and 'Anaiza.

Its chief group of wells which need be mentioned are:

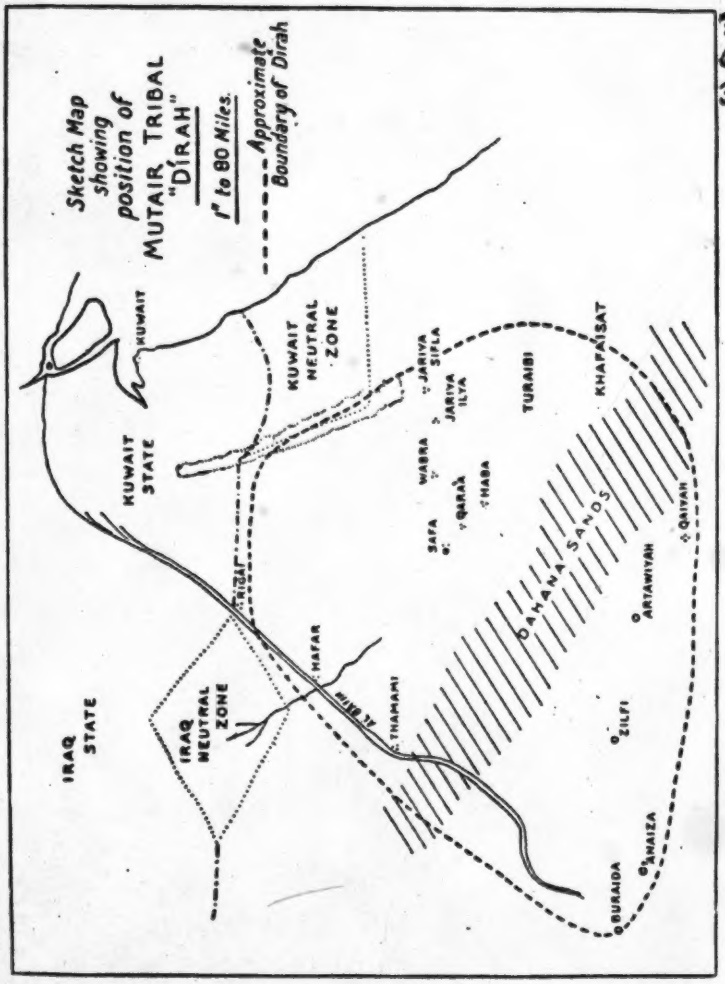
(*a*) Hafar al Bátin, the property of ibn Ashwan (Braih group of the Wasil Mutair).
(*b*) Sáfá, the property of ibn Lami (Jiblan).
(*c*) Jariya Ilya, the property of Al Shuqair (Dushan).
(*d*) Jariya Sifla, the property of Al Fugum (Al Sahabba).
(*e*) Hábá, the property of Al Májid (Dushan).
(*f*) Qara'a, the property of Al Shuqair (Dushan).
(*g*) Wabra, the property of the Dushan.
(*h*) Qaiyah, the property of Al Faisal (Dushan).
(*i*) Dijani, the property of Al Bara'asa (Muaha).

[622] 361 The Dushan being the ruling clan, with its Shaikh Al Duwish, controls also the tribal capital, or head village of Artawiyah.

619 This latter is an 'Ikhwan centre, and the creation of the present Ruler of Sa'udi Arabia, who for political reasons placed in each tribal

* A reference to the tribal map at the end of this book will be found convenient.

l: Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
Bedouins MJ4



361
619
312

p46a

k: Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
Bedouins MJ4

619 *dirah* a small township as a sign that the whole tribe had embraced
361 Wahhabi-ism, and abandoned its old ignorant and roaming existence.

The terrain included in the Mutair tribal *dirah* consists of part of the
133 sandy *Dahana* region in the south, the rocky and broken *Summan*
312 and *Wiriya* regions in the centre, and the steppe-like tablelands of the
233 *Mujdair—Qara'a-* and *Musannat* regions in the north.

The whole *dirah* is a choice and good one, and *'arfaj*, *nassi* and *hamdh*, the mainstay of camels and most perfect of all grazing for these animals, are to be found in plenty when the rainfall is good.

This Mutair *dirah* is approximately 120 miles broad by 180 miles long, and may be taken as a typical example of an average tribe's homeland. There are, of course, other tribes who own larger and more extensive areas, but then scarcity of water and poorer grazing has compelled them from earliest times to seize and hold these bigger blocks of land. For in actual fact a tribe does not want a larger tract than is sufficient for its needs. So if a tribe's country is rich in water and all forms of grazing, all it requires is an area as big as that of the Mutair.

361 The tribes surrounding the Mutair, who own *dirahs* similar to theirs,
619 are as follows:

The 'Awazim and 'Ajman on the east and south-east.

The Sbei and Sahul on the south.

The Harb, Shammar and Dhafir on the west, and Kuwait territory on the north, which in olden times, and before boundaries of western conception were introduced, all belonged to the Mutair, except for the narrow coastal strip which was included in the 'Awazim *dirah*.*

619 A tribe does not, of course, remain always isolated in its own *dirah*.
221 If rains are good and grazing is plentiful, it naturally stops at home, but if rains fail it must migrate to places where grazing exists, and so overflows into the territories of its neighbours. It cannot, of course,

* It should be realised that there are two other great groups of the Mutair tribe, stretching from the Qasim in the centre of Arabia to near Madina in the Hijaz. They are known as the Bani 'Abdillah Mutair, and Maymun, and in numbers and strength are perhaps superior to their cousins the 'Ilwa and Braih described above. The whole tribe, of course, is one, and though the Bani 'Abdilla have their own powerful Shaikhs, they will all follow the standard of Al Duwish the hereditary Shaikh who resides at Artawiyah.†

† For the names of the Mutair, 'Awazim and Shammar Shaikhs see Appendix II. A map of the Mutair Tribal *dirah* will be found at the end of the book.

l: Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
Bedouins MJ4

THE ANNUAL MOVES

312 During the summer months, i.e. June, July, August, September
● 361 and half October, the Badawin world of North-East Arabia concen-
283 trates on its wells (*gulbán*), which in each case are groups of wells
182 lying close together and in number anything from five to fifty. Here
221 they camp (*igaiyathun*), their tents close together, their herds of camels and sheep grazing in close proximity, for the animals now have to be watered daily. Here the weary and long agony of summer has to be endured. Man and woman, child as well as horse, sheep and camel go through a period of real hardship and suffering. The heat is intense (the tent temperature often reaches 125° F.), supplies are scarce, *musábilah* is a torture, and last but not least the Badawin and his stock are vulnerable to any raiding party that may be paying off old scores, or thinks to add to its stock of camels. For in summer the whole Badawin world knows where each Shaikh So-and-So is camped.

Even in peace-time there is therefore always some anxiety, but if hostilities should exist between two tribes or groups of tribes, and the Central Government is busy elsewhere, then over a wide area no man's life or cattle are safe; and in addition to having to endure the intense heat and privation of the Arabian summer, strong patrols have continually to move about and guard the camel-herds and bring
735 them in at night. Nor is this all, for if peace reigns, summer is the
651 time when the *zakát* tax has to be paid to the Central Government or Ruler of the State. So on top of all his troubles, and just when he is most hard up, the Badawin may any day expect his lord and master's tax-gatherers suddenly to appear with a *sariya* (armed party). Woe betide him who tries to evade this tax! There is no escape, for like the enemy, the tax-gatherer knows where each Badawin shaikh has camped for the summer.

The enemy when anarchy exists, the Government official when peace reigns, have each got the wretched Badawin secure in summer. Both are hated; both, he believes, are out to hurt him, and both are the foe of him and of his kind.

221 At long last October, or the *wasm* season (the rains) arrives and
132 small clouds begin to gather in the far west and south, and once more

k Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
Bedouins MJ4

already gone ahead to spy out the land, the grazing and the water. Assuming that there is no enemy near or danger imminent, the baggage-camels and women folk follow fairly close on their heels. After the women and camp gear, the herds of camels and sheep follow on a broad front, slowly grazing along till they reach their new camp. There they find everything ready and the tents pitched. A strong guard is, of course, left with the herds. As in the case of the individual tent owner, the shaikh decides on where the camp is to be, and on the spot where he kneels his camel and off-saddles, his own tent will be pitched.

A tribe in camp is not concertinaed up but scatters out over a wide space, each group of family tents being about two hundred yards from its neighbour if the ground is broken, and possibly four hundred yards apart in flat open ground. Hence a body of Badawin having, say, four hundred tents will cover a wide area when camped. This is the procedure in winter or spring when no enemy is about and likely to attack. In summer, on the other hand, when the tribe is camped on water, it literally surrounds the wells with tents, leaving only sufficient space for the camels and sheep to drink. Tents on such occasions are close together and generally in a series of lines, with tent ropes almost touching those of their neighbours. The widely scattered camp formation of winter may make it difficult for the fighting men to concentrate suddenly, but is ideal for passive defence. A sudden surprise raid cannot penetrate deeply into such a camp, as each tent becomes a small fort from which fire is directed on the intruders, who soon find themselves fired on from all sides. (The German pill-box system during the first Great War proved the efficacy of the method.) Badawin methods of fighting are discussed in Chapter XXVI.

NOTE—

Assás—the man who goes ahead to look for best grazing ground.

Sallâf—the leader of the tribe or head of family on the march. He always rides alone at head.

Makhâr—is name given to the family baggage-camels as opposed to *Al Aba'ir*, milch and loose camels on march.

Al Ghanam—the sheep on the march.

Al Baham—the lambs who march separate from the ewes.

i. Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
Bedouins 1434

CHAPTER VI

Badawin Social System

SETTLERS AND NOMADS

369 The Arabs divide themselves into two main groups:
184 Al Hadhar and Al Bádia.

Al hadhar (singular: *hadhari*) are those who dwell in permanent stone or mud houses, i.e. townsfolk or villagers; *al bádia* are those who live nomad lives, own camels and live in black hair-tents (*biyut sha'ar*).

From this word *bádia* comes also our word Badawin (often written in French style, Bedouin), which is not used or understood in Arabia proper.

The dweller in the black tents, although he may occasionally speak of himself as a man of *badu* or nomad calling (e.g. *"Hanu Badu"*—we are Badawin, etc.), he does so to signify that he is a wild, simple man of the desert, and not versed in the cunning ways of settled life.

[186] He far more often refers to himself and his people by the proud title "'Arab"—e.g. *'Arabna sawwadu, 'Arabna niẓẓalu l ala Subaibiyah* —Our Arabs have gone up into the interior, or, Our Arabs have camped at Subaibiyah.

If a Badawin meets a nomad stranger in his territory he will enquire, after salaams and general greetings, *Inta minain ya walad?*—From whence art thou, O youth? The answer is, *'Ana min 'Arab fulan* —I am from such and such a person's Arabs.

369 Not to be confused with the 'Arab or pure-bred Badawin, are the
361 'Arabdar or 'Arab-ad-Dar. The latter is the name commonly given in Kuwait and also, I believe, in Najd to those semi-nomads who are found in black tents on the borders of the great desert, and who camp close to the towns in summer, and move out into the interior, a matter of 80 to 100 miles from their homes proper, in winter. Many of them also own small house property in the cities they are attached

I Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
Bedouins MJ4

to, and the type may be called, for lack of a better description, Badawin in the transition stage to a more settled existence.

These 'Arabdar, certainly in Kuwait, usually have large flocks of sheep, and only a few camels to give them milk and move their tents as they follow the grazing. Many of them are of good Sharif stock such as 'Ajman, Munair, 'Utaiba and Harb 'Arabdar; and their members go and come from the towns to their original tribes, and regularly intermarry with their desert cousins.

The good 'Arabdawi is not necessarily looked down upon by the pure Badawin, especially if he is of good stock, but the latter undoubtedly think him rather a soft sort of semi-townsman, who has grown rich in the service of a town ruler, and prefers the fleshpots of *hadhar* life to the real hardships of the desert. They, the 'Arabdawi, are in short a sort of half-Badawin, to be made use of by the pure-bred article, when the latter comes up to town to purchase his needs. The Arabdawi is also a useful go-between in business transactions involving sheep and camels, and at all times is rather proud to act as host and put up his Badawin brother who asks for a night's lodging in the city.

Ahalena al Bada, is a common cry heard among the 'Arabdawis of Kuwait, yet they get prestige and honour among their neighbours, whenever they put up these desert cousins, especially their shaikhs. These half-Badawin 'Arabdar are generally peaceful, for war does not pay them. As their wealth lies in their sheep rather than in their camels, there is no inducement for them to raid, and lift other people's camels, the temptation *par excellence* of the Badawin raider, who is himself so vulnerable. Nevertheless, the 'Arabdawi is an excellent fighting man if it comes to supporting his shaikh or defending the town he depends on.

There is yet another desert dweller who must not be confused with either the pure Badawin nomad, or his 'Arabdar cousin. This is the tribal desert shepherd, whose job in life is to care for the sheep either of the town dwellers or of the more well-to-do tribal shaikhs. As sheep cannot keep pace with camel migrations, and the areas in which they can graze are much more circumscribed or narrowly defined than those wandered over by the camel tribes, a class of shepherds has evolved, who move in areas of their own, but who are allied to

k Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
Bedouins MJ4

619 (1) *In Hasa and Kuwait* (East Arabia).

565 The 'Awazim tribe, probably of Hutaim origin, and originally a serf-community of the 'Ajman.

The Rashaida Tribe—certainly of Hutaim origin; originally serfs of the Mutair, and retainers of the Shaikhs of Kuwait from earliest times.

(2) *In North-West Arabia.*

The Hutaim—A large and very powerful group of tribes, who generally acknowledge the overlordship of Shaikhs Ibn Barak and Ibn Naumas. (The Shararat tribe, for instance, forms part of the great Hutaim group.)

(3) *All over North and North Central Arabia.*

The Sulubba—The lowest, most despised of desert men, and said to be descendants of the Christian Crusaders. Great guides and hunters. (See Chapter XLI.)

(4) *Central and North Arabia.*

The Aqail or Agail*—residents of Qasim and Baghdad. From time immemorial camel-dealers of the desert.

The great house of Al Bassam are Aqailis.

[826] (5) Not to be confused with the above, are the Al Sana,† a community of ironmongers, farriers and arms-repairers, sections of whom each Sharif tribe protects and possesses as part of itself. *Sawa* is the plural of *Sana*, e.g. Sanna al Mutair, Sanna al Rashid, etc.

[582] No Sharif Arab can take a daughter from (or give a daughter to) (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) above. His own tribe would not tolerate it, and his relations would kill the offender. The excuse would be that he [628] was spoiling the tribe's blood. Everyone will remember the shooting of the capable 'Abdullah Beg al Sana, Governor of Baghdad in 1932, by His Excellency 'Abdullah Beg al Falah Pasha al Sa'adun, because of the former's foolish attempt to marry the Europeanised daughter of His Excellency 'Abdul Muhsin al Sa'adun, Prime Minister of Iraq. The true Arab of the desert, from Bin Sa'ud downward, not only condoned the murder, but highly approved it.

361 * The Aqail or Agail are, of course, not a Badawin tribe in any sense of the word, for they live in the towns. They more correctly should be termed a *hadhar* community.

† Members of this class have often risen to the highest positions of trust under various Arab Rulers as well as under the Turks.

k Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
Bedouins MJ4

she will set : a light pole, usually one of the tent side-supports, and 574
hang one of her holiday orange, red or black garments on it, and stick it into the ground in front of her tent as a signal. This is her silent way of inviting the stranger to come and partake. I have been thus invited on several occasions, especially by members of the 'Ajman tribe and the Muntafiq.

If a man and his wife are both at home and a guest arrives, of whatever status, he is welcomed by the man and placed in the *diwāniyah* portion of the tent, that is, the end furthest away from the women's quarters. There he is given his coffee, food and a place to sleep. The women do not come near him or attempt to talk to him, unless he happens to remain two or three days, on account perhaps of heavy rains. The women then thaw somewhat, and when they do address him it is as "my brother".

When Badawins are encamped singly, they always endeavour to 361
hide their tents in hollows and in such positions as to escape notice. 574
This is partly due to a natural desire to escape attention in case an enemy is about, but more often to escape being seen by a traveller. The latter must be attended to if he begs for food and a night's shelter, and this entertaining of strange guests often bears very heavily on the tent-dweller. These remarks apply to the Badawin of the desert proper and do not include tribes such as the settled ones of Iraq, who are very wealthy and normally entertain on a most lavish scale.

Some tribes, especially the Muntafiq of the Euphrates, are so 574
scrupulous in exercising hospitality that they often almost ruin themselves rather than be thought stingy to guests. A man having only a single sheep in the world will go and kill it to feed a strange guest. The Braih (Wasil) section of the desert Mutair have a similar reputation for entertaining, and are looked up to in consequence. The Birzan subsection of this tribe, having been blessed by the Prophet himself for their kindness and hospitality, were rewarded by being told that their blood even was blessed—hence it is believed that to drink a Birzani's blood will cure a man of impotence, cause a woman to conceive and counter the poison of a mad dog.

Some tribes, notably the Dhafir, have an unpleasant custom which 264
often annoys those sitting down to a meal. Say there are ten men dining together, if one gets up satisfied, the rest must at once all get

k Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait MI 1
Bedouins MJ4

plenty of grazing, he postpones this final move as late as possible, but if the reverse, then the 20th May may see him settled down for his enforced five months of idleness and physical discomfort.

As far as North-Eastern Arabia is concerned the following are the great Badawin camping grounds from north to south:

(*a*) *Safwan*—immediately north of Kuwait Border, in Iraq territory.
(*b*) *Jahrah*—at the head of the Bay of Kuwait.
(*c*) *Kuwait*—(Shamiyah and Dasma wells) outside the walls of Kuwait.
(*d*) *Subaihiyah*—on the southern border of Kuwait.
(*e*) *Tawil*—S.W. of Jabal Wara and 10 miles N.W. of Subaihiyah in Kuwait.
(*f*) *Wafra*—in the Kuwait Neutral Zone.
(*g*) *'Ark*—on the southern border of Neutral Zone.
(*h*) *Jeriyah Ilya*, *Jeriyah Sifli*, *Safa*, *Haba*, *Qara'a*—in the Mutair Summan country 170 miles S.S.W. of Kuwait (Sa'udi Arabia).
(*i*) *Hafar al Bâtin*—in the Bâtin Valley (Sa'udi Arabia) 150 miles S.W. of Kuwait.
(*j*) *'Ajibba*—in the Harb tribal country, S.W. of the Mutair Summan (Sa'udi Arabia).
(*k*) *Ingair*, *'Nta*, *Awaina*, *Sarrar*—in mid Hasa, Wadi al Miyah region (Sa'udi Arabia).
(*l*) *Qatif*, *Hufuf*—in South Hasa (Sa'udi Arabia).

There is also the well-known camping quadrilateral in the Iraq Neutral Zone lying 140 miles west of Kuwait, known under the general term of *Tawal al Dhafir*, and consisting of several well-areas such as Dulaimiyah, Arkhaimiyah, Julaida, Al Thamiriyah, etc.

By tribal law each of the above wells belongs to a different tribe or section of tribe, and strangers can theoretically be kept away from them. Actually under the strong rule of the Al Sa'ud and the Al Subah, other tribes or parts of tribes are to-day allowed to make use of them, provided there is no overcrowding and there is no enmity between the actual owners of the water and the strangers. It goes without saying that should a tribe of a foreign State camp for summer

k Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
Bedouins MI4

are examined from every angle. If a majority of the leaders are convinced of the soundness of the plan, the matter is settled, and a concentration of all fighting men takes place at a prearranged rendezvous, to carry out the plan agreed upon. Only the old and very young remain behind to guard the tents and camels.

A tribal army or force is called a *Qaum* (pronounced *Gaum*), e.g. "Gaum ibn Sa'ud"—Bin Sa'ud's army.

The actual force that raids or attacks is known as a *Ghazzu*.

The term *harbiyah* is unknown among the Badawin of Najd, though it is commonly used in Iraq.

If Bin Sa'ud as king were in command of war operations in Najd, the tribes would be moved about at will, until launched to the attack, and at the point decided on by him. The actual method of attack would be probably left to the tribal leaders.

In warfare between the tribes as opposed to states, the main object is to round up and seize camels, and if you cannot capture stock, to inflict as much damage as possible on the enemy's young men.

During winter few raids take place,

(a) Because there is grazing everywhere and strong tribes concentrate where their camels and sheep are actually feeding, and successful surprise is therefore almost impossible.

(b) The movements of the tribes are not dictated by the question of water, which is generally found everywhere (rain pans, shallow pools, etc.).

(c) If a tribe is small and weak it can avoid its known enemies and likely attacks, by continually moving about and evacuating areas which may be dangerous.

In summer all Badawin are peculiarly vulnerable, for they must camp with tents closely concentrated over perennial wells, while their camels must of necessity go some distance away for their grazing. This vulnerability increases as summer progresses, for the grazing gets further and further away from the main camp. Nor can the tribe or community camped on water maintain its full armed forces with the camels, as food and water difficulties arise. They are compelled to leave the custody of their stock to patrols, a very unsatisfactory protection, for if the patrol cannot hold the raiders in their first rush, the latter simply round up the whole or part of the flocks and drive

k Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
Bedouins MJ4

721 them off, long before any supporting body can reach them from the main camp.
361

It follows that from a European airman's point of view desert targets will also always be bad in the winter season, for tribes then pitch their tents singly or in twos and threes, over a large area of country, each group of tents being separated from its neighbour by a distance of anything from a quarter to half a mile. This is done for support purposes in case of Arab attack, and to ensure that camels are well scattered, and get full benefit from the grazing. Therefore, just as the Badawin is difficult of location and attack in winter and spring, from the point of view of his own Arab enemies, so a European force operating from the air against Badawin would be handicapped and affect little real damage during the cold season, as the scattered nature of camps would assist the defence, and if necessary immediate and further dispersion would be an easy operation. The opposite is of course the case in summer.

RAIDS

726 For a raid pure and simple, the Badawin relies on the element of surprise for success. If he has reason to suppose his movements are known and are being anticipated he will abandon his project without hesitation.

For long-distance raids only camels are employed, and a stroke may be delivered from a hostile concentration 250 miles or more away, day and night marching being the custom. For short-distance raids, camels and horses are employed in equal strength, a horseman riding behind each camelman, and the horses being led until the force is within striking distance of its quarry. The horsemen then dismount and make their final charge on horseback. The camelmen act the role of the supporting force, and cover the horsemen when driving off the enemy's camels.

Camel and horse raids can be carried out from a distance of anything up to 100 miles.*

* A notable instance of such long-distance horse and camel raid was when Ajmi al Sa'adun swooped down on Basra from Khamisiyah near Suq esh Shuyukh on the Euphrates, a year or so before World War I.

H. Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
Bedouins MJ4

565 619 [142] [161] In cast of countenance they would appear to be definitely non-Arab, and have none of the pronounced Semitic features of the latter. In areas like Kuwait and Zubair, where they always maintain a large permanent camp outside the city walls, they are sometimes taken by Europeans for ordinary Badawin. This is a bad mistake and leads at times to awkward situations.

582 575 No Arab can marry a Sulubba girl. He would be killed by his people if he did, and she also. Nevertheless, I have heard it said that the Amir Fawaz of the Ruwala has no compunction in taking a pretty Sulubba maiden into the desert and keeping her as his mistress. For this he is roundly cursed by all good Badawin.

622 565 619 Most Sulubba settlements have their headmen, but where they are in strength among the major tribes of Arabia they have their shaikhs, some of whom own large flocks and herds of camels and are up to a point highly respected.

For instance:

Shaikh Hamad ibn Shennut is the Shaikh of the Mutair Sulubba.
Shaikh Mutallij al Safi is the Shaikh of the Shammar Sulubba.
Shaikh Muhammad ibn Jilad is the Shaikh of the Amarat Sulubba.
Shaikh Ma'aithif is the Shaikh of the Ruwala Sulubba.

291 The Sulubba women never veil and rarely wear a *milfa* over the lower part of their faces. Hence in Najd they are at once recognisable.

535 They are very fond of dancing, and on any feast day or at a marriage ceremony, the first thing they do is to organise a dance. This takes the form of men and women dancing together (a highly disgraceful and unseemly thing among Arabs), at which the men every now and then kiss their partners on the mouth and before the audience.

619 The Sulubba has among his ceremonies, dances, etc., the strange custom of hoisting a cross made from two pieces of wood tied together in the form of a Christian emblem. It may be called his tribal mark or standard.

565 619 174 Well-read Arabs, like Shaikh 'Abdullah Salim al Subah, cousin of the Shaikh of Kuwait, and others, say quite definitely that the Sulubba are descendants of the large number of Crusader camp followers, who were taken captive during the Crusade and Saracen wars; that vast numbers of these camp followers were taken in several great battles

k Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
Bedouins MI4
Muntafiq

484 462 way back to their tents. No one ever molests them, and it would go hard with a mere man who attempted to interfere with a bevy of these tribal lasses on the march.

Hukra tents are not pitched close together, but in ones and twos, 361 233 each in sight of a neighbour. This enables one tent dweller to come to the assistance of his neighbours all round him if necessary. The result is that large areas of desert country are dotted as far as the eye can see with little specks of two or three or even one black tent. The above method of scattering widely is in vogue only if peace reigns in the land. It is healthy, sheep are not crowded together, and grazing is systematically gone over.

[722] Were there to be war, or even a rumour of war in the air, the shepherd tribes would either concentrate closer together by day and night, or make for home again.

221 233 The return to Iraq of the shepherd tribes takes place usually about the end of April or early in May when water becomes scarce and sheep have to get back to the Euphrates before the desert grazing dries up.

439 Just as they have made wool, butter, milk, mutton, etc., cheap in Kuwait, so with the money realised they take home rice, sugar, coffee, clothes for their women and girls, and presents for those who stayed behind. Their return home, therefore, though bad for Kuwait, is a joyous one for their relatives on the Euphrates.

651 648 431 To ensure good treatment for themselves in Kuwait and Sa'udi Arabia, the Hukra pay *dhablhah wa manlhah*, consisting of gifts of young lambs, to the local Governor or Ruler, and they also pay *ṭakás* voluntarily, if unrest is in the air and they want to receive serious protection from possible raiders. The Sa'udi Government officials are stern in the enforcement of *ṭakás*, but the Shaikh of Kuwait, whose state derives benefit from the Iraq shepherds, always waives his right to it.

836 Kuwait is definitely the poorer for the annual departure of the Hukra, and their return the following year is always looked forward to by the majority of the people. Not the least to be missed are the merry laughing faces of these daughters of the Muntafiq on the Jahrah–Kuwait road, who joke with everybody and miss no opportunity of displaying pretty eyes and dainty tattoo-covered chins and

21:Ashkenazi E-4 (no date) 1948 MJ1 Saudi Arabia
Bedouin MJ4

161

the Sba (3,000 tents), who winter to the east of the Jebel Aniza and advance as far as the Gaara region itself; and the Ruwalla (4,000 tents).[58]

No census was made among the Bedouins and it is clear that real statistics are lacking nowdays.

619
●361

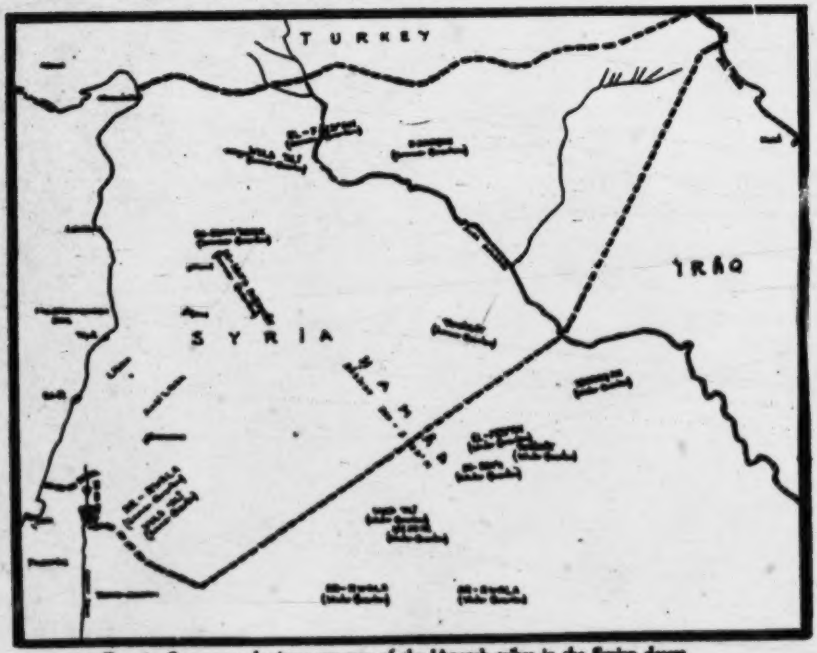


FIG. 1. Summer and winter quarters of the 'Anazah tribes in the Syrian desert.

MIGRATION PROBLEMS

221

At the present time the district covered by their wanderings include the whole Syrian plain, and reaches to the north as far as the latitude of Aleppo, and they are also found in the Beka'a,[59] to the south as far as the Sammâr hills, and east-

58 *Report of the Commission Entrusted by the Council*, etc., p. 27.

59 Cf. L. Dubertret and J. Weulersse, *Manuel de géographie: Syrie, Liban et Proche Orient* (Beyrouth, 1940), part 1: "La péninsule Arabique," pp. 15-16.